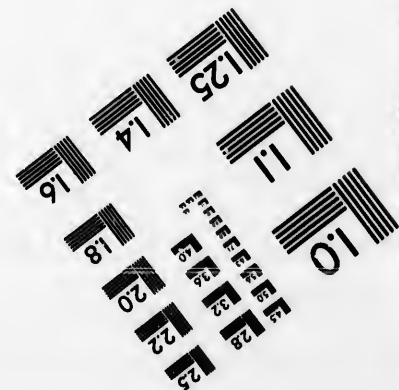
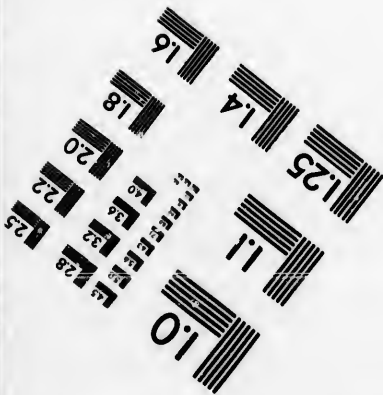
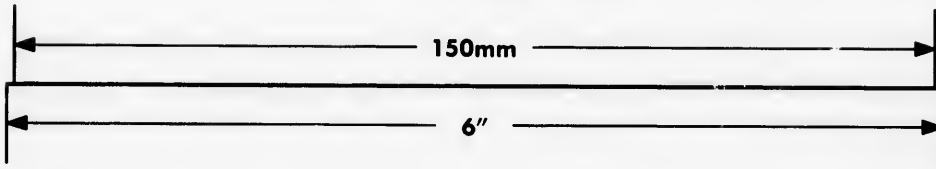
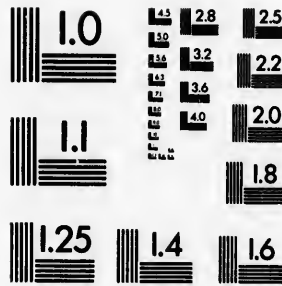
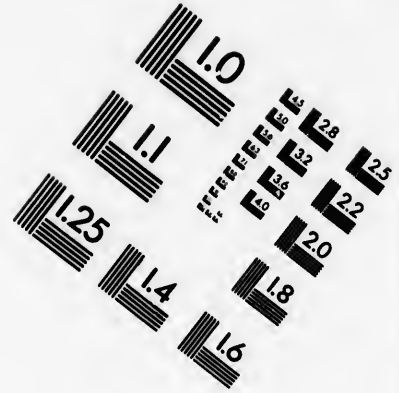
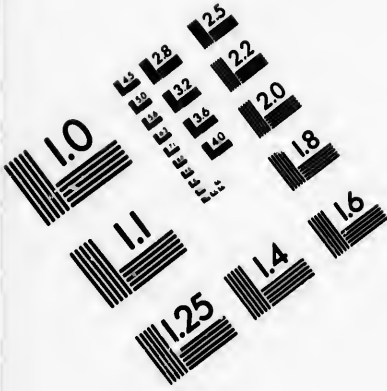


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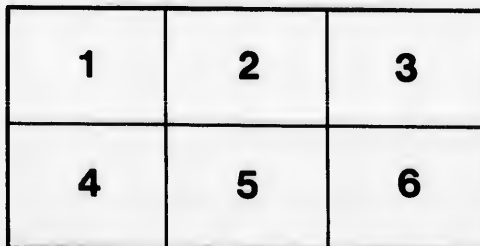
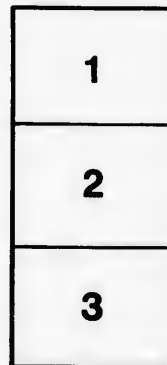
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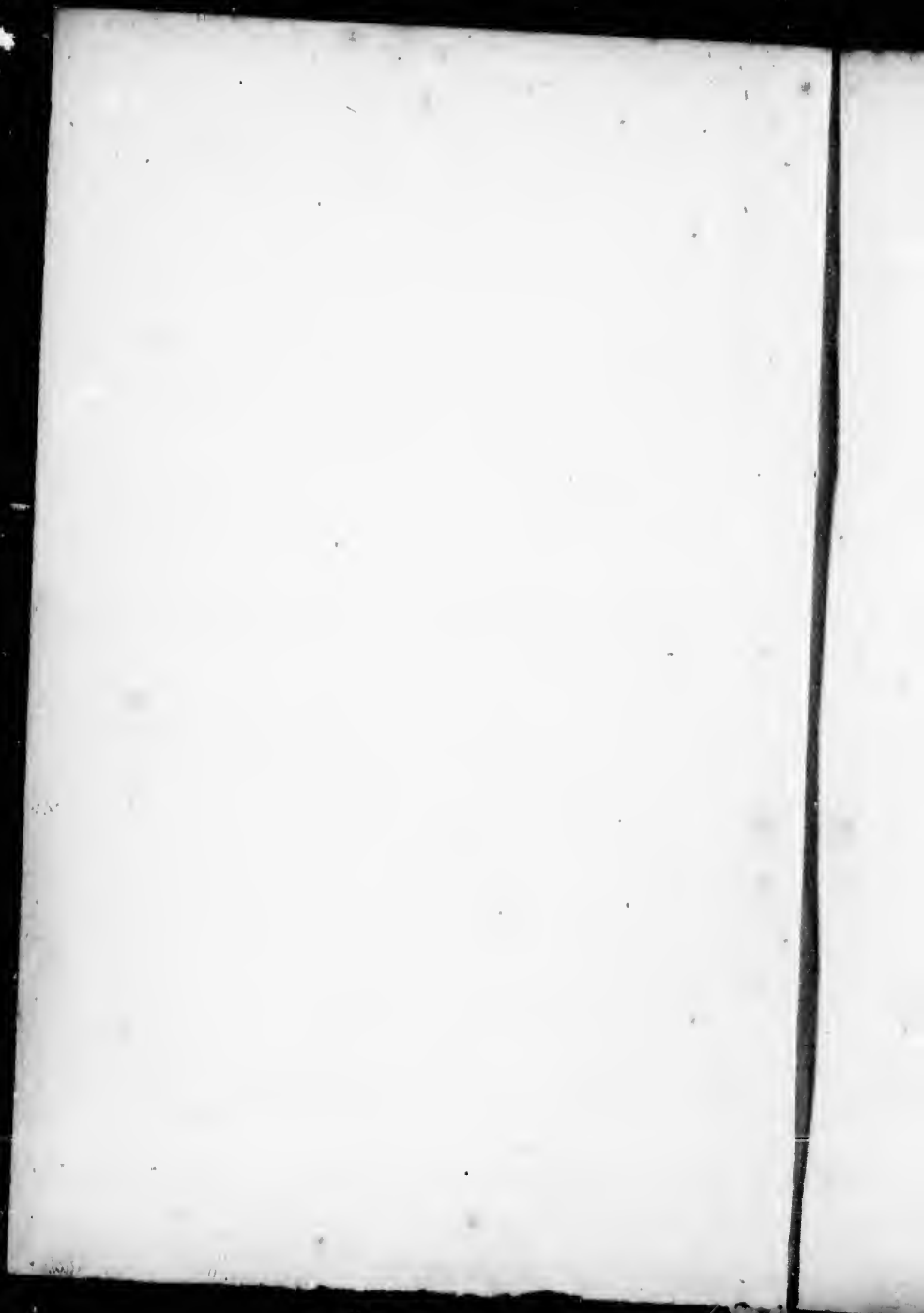
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DRIFT.



# D R I F T

BY

BECKLES WILLSON

*When the river onward gushes,  
Bearing burdens on its tide;  
Drift is garnered by the rushes . . .*

LONDON :

GAY AND BIRD,

32, BEDFORD STREET, STRAND.

—  
1897

PS 8545

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To C. A. G-T.

WITH THE DEEPEST GRATITUDE  
AND AFFECTION.

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DRIFT.

**W**HEN the river onward gushes,  
    *Bearing burdens on its tide;*  
*Drift is garnered by the rushes*  
    *Rescued from the ceaseless tide.*

*Spray from Huron, cones from Erie,*  
    *Hemlock from the Gatineau.*  
*Grasses quaint from prairies dreary*  
    *Mocking at the ebb and flow.*

*Drift of weeds and drift of branches,*  
    *Odd wisps from the blue-bird's nest,*  
*Yellowed stalks from distant ranches,*  
    *Sumac from the Golden West.*

*There are green and humble pages*  
    *Of our making which do sift*  
*Life's grey river as it rages,*  
    *And leave hidden yonder—Drift.*

LONDON :  
PRINTED BY TROS. WILLIAMS,  
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**M**OTHERS have watched their  
fledglings wing  
Higher into God's broad sky;  
Others have sung the songs I sing,  
Sweeter than I.

Only I thought that my song would reach  
Up to where you've built your nest;  
Lonely, I sought to put life into speech,  
As I knew best.

Longer and duller the path I view,  
Who will mark my feeble scrawl?  
Hunger I now for a smile from you,  
Sweet, that is all.

*THE MONK.*

I CHANCED upon him while a summer  
shower  
Drenched all the landscape, all save our  
retreat ;  
We felt the glow of knowledge, and the  
heat  
Of communing made to pass a pleasant  
hour.  
“ I’m aged ! ” quoth he, “ you think me  
worthy now :  
But I bear not my message on my brow.  
“ My virtues are not mine ; my sterile  
youth  
Laughs me to scorn. My later years  
Are all I cherish ; and my childhood’s  
tears.  
The vale of my lost boyhood was not  
smooth—  
No soul strayed thither to admire the  
vine ;  
And if I virtues have, they are not mine.



hile a summer  
all save our  
dge, and the  
s a pleasant  
ou think me  
on my brow.  
my sterile  
ter years  
childhood's  
od was not  
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not mine.

“ My soul throve not at first—the feeble  
twig  
Put forth such blossom never. Yet the  
soil  
In which it grew was generous. 'Twas  
the toil  
Of constant grafting made the stem wax  
big,  
And caused the plant to burgeon. I  
became  
A part—the best—of others—yet the  
same.

“ From them I borrowed sap, and bud,  
and heart ;  
And yet I scorned the world and all my  
friends !  
I fashioned for myself my own ends,  
And throve, or strove to thrive, apart.  
So might the lake despise the creek and  
rill  
That feed it, and its void basin fill.

"I struck the world, and thought it  
struck me back,  
And parried fancied blows till I grew  
spent ;  
While the world, unconscious, through  
its labours went,  
Nor knew of my existence, until, alack!  
I, witless, sank upon its bosom; when  
it kissed my cheek  
And laved my fevered brow till I could  
speak.

"And you are young, and mayhap be  
of those  
Who bear a grudge against your fellow  
men,  
And deem mankind is passing cruel,  
when  
It causèd naught ; your sorrows and the  
blows  
You dealt yourself. It gave the balm  
alone."  
And while I pondered, lo! the monk  
was gone.

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*THE PROGRESS OF LIGHT.*

**E**RE daybreak, out across the hills  
I rode to meet the dawn;  
Past torrents, rivers, lakes, and rills;  
O'er field, and moor, and lawn.

My horse sped on, and on, and on;  
Then fell, all foaming white.  
Shrill shrieking, as the first ray shone,  
I fled before the light.

Unhorsed and crippled, fled I back  
To seek my love, the dark.  
Beneath the dripping dew, alack,  
The night lay stiff and stark!

FRANCES: A THRENODY.

I.

**I** MOURN for Frances; and the billows mourn  
And dash upon the rocks their briny tears.  
High on this giddy cliff I sit forlorn,  
With no irreverent sound to vex mine ears  
Save the sad moaning of the wind. On high  
The pale moon glistens, half obscured by clouds,  
And quick, fantastic shadows on the waters lie—  
Patches of fleck which seem like shrouds.

II.

Out on this vast, wide, solitary sea,  
No human eye but mine looks down;  
And silence such as this might only be  
When hell to burst its bonds has  
helpless grown—  
A fearful hush, too grim to last—  
A longer space than that from light to  
light.

RENODY.

; and the bil-

cks their briny

sit forlorn,  
and to vex mine

the wind. On

half obscured

dows on the

seem like

itary sea,  
looks down;  
might only be  
bonds has

last—  
rom light to

III.

Hark to the moaning of the querulous  
wind!

'Tis naught to me; yet that it doth  
so weep.

What destiny hath it, it dares be mind  
To grieve with thinking? Has the  
fickle deep

Pressed to its bosom some younger love,  
That Caurus moans as with a sorrow  
fraught?

IV.

To others, Ocean, be that which thou  
wilt.

To them who have the gift of dreams,  
A sunny lawn of sea, all richly gilt  
With gems. A maiden boisterous with  
life,

A hoary sire—aught which them be-  
seems.

But I, alas! was never Fancy's slave—  
I see no lustre in thy distant wave—  
To me thou art a grim, unholy grave.

v.

And yet, as in my dead, lost youth I had  
In churchyards dreams of life; so now  
I feel a touch of sweetness, and am glad  
At midnight on this drear and giddy  
brow;  
And all my tale of love comes smiling  
back to me,  
Above this mighty, fondless sepulchre,  
the sea.

vi.

And while I own this vision, which is  
mine,  
I pray that this may be my mortal  
end.  
O God of Life, I cannot more repine!  
Nor to a greater, deeper sorrow bend!  
Nor go forth to the world again to weep!  
My strength in passion did its flower  
spend:  
I'd lay me down for ever, now, to sleep.

VII.

Mine eyes are red with weeping, and  
the breeze

Would fain assoil my grief, it moaneth  
so.

Mine eye is red with weeping; yet it  
sees

Something, O Christ, upon the waves  
below:

A swathèd corpse, that calmly rides,  
White as the primal snow. 'Tis she,  
enfold

By frothy couriers of the polar tides,  
With hair bleached to a silver hue  
from gold.

I mourn for Frances; and I see her  
there,

Drifting adown the flood like sweet  
Elaine;

Or if yonder be not she,—her hair  
and form,

Her melting features and her snowy  
hands,—

It is the presage of a nearing storm,  
Or strip of seaweed from unhallowed  
lands.

She was my only love! I think she  
died;—  
I think she pined and withered, like  
a tree  
When light and water are to it denied;—  
I think she paled, and her sweet  
breath did flee  
To Heaven. But whether in my heart  
my bride  
Expired, or the world, I'd ask of ye:  
I only know—that she is dead to me.



I think she  
withered, like

it denied;—  
her sweet

in my heart

ask of ye:  
lead to me.

MADNESS.

I WATCH the sea-gulls as they speed  
O'er the bleak and sullen waves;  
And I watch the ravens, without heed,  
Perch midst a thousand graves.

Wearily, as the moth at night  
Its feeble life outfretting,  
I strove with wings to touch aright  
The radiance of forgetting.

'Tis deeply conned by mist at noon,  
Conned in the heat and snow;  
And I wistfully crave of the vacant morn  
What only the night can know.

I dread the night, and dare not ask  
It surcease from my sorrow.  
It holds the secret of my task,  
Yet—I will wait the morrow!

*THE BORDER.*

**O** YOUTH have we, and pride of  
race!

From surf to surf our lands extending.  
We look all nations in the face,  
But ne'er to any we'll be bending!  
Our snows are cold, our hearts are warm,  
We'll stint no laugh or honest greeting;  
But to the foes who'd us alarm,  
Another welcome they'll be meeting.

Let them come over the Border,  
boys!

Powder and steel is the order,  
boys!

For traitors and knaves, and  
tyrants and slaves,

May stay where they are, o'er the  
Border, boys!

nd pride of

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e Border,

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o'er the

There caitiffs be in every land!

And cravens be in our Dominion,

Who'd see yon bird of prey expand

And cover us with her grey pinion.

But little reck ye of our hearts,

And little of our temper dreaming,

Could ye believe we e'er would part

With one green blade for all its

screaming!

SONG.

THOUGH dark the night, there is  
a gem

I prize more than the moon.

Thy bright eye is a diadem—

To Love the night is noon.

And now I hang upon its glance

To make me sad or gay,

What need of speech the heart to reach!

Am I to go or stay?

Not with thy lips, but with thine eyes

Tell me the story of thine heart:

If I may win life's fondest prize,

Or if for evermore we'll part.

Oh! tell me what I long to know:

It is but yea or nay.

I can but stay, I can but go,

Tho' I would love always.

Thy voice is soft, and sweeter far

Than lark of Acadie;

But words are vain, and bring pain—

My Fate I'd learn from thee.

*OUT TO SEA.*

**D**RIFT we away from the shores  
of youth—

Old-fashioned shores where a happiness  
stood.

Drag us out, Life, from the boyhood's  
good!

Drag us out, Tide, to the merciless  
truth!

Out, out to sea!—where the breakers  
roar;

Where the fierce human waves, o'er an  
ocean bleak,

Struggle, and clamber, and foam, and  
shriek,—

Wretched and rudderless drift we from  
shore.

*AT MIDNIGHT.*

**I**T has been always so: men love the  
    din  
Of Life's artillery, and the pomp of  
    marts;  
Because the slow tear of charity, which  
    starts  
It, dries; and the soul silences within.

Yet there are times when this brave  
    show of pride,  
These puissant mobs, dissolve to little  
    man;  
And that man leisure finds, himself to  
    scan,  
At midnight—when the mask is laid  
    aside.

*THE MOTHERLAND.*

'TIS our birthright to see the light  
While other tribes in darkness  
grope ;

We bow the knee 'fore no grandee,  
Nor tyrant, demagogue, nor Pope.

And when fight we on land or sea,  
For the love of the soil our blood we  
shed,

And for the hawthorn white and red,  
The heather, and the primrose bed.  
Are English mothers, maids, and wives,  
Not worth the peril of our lives ?

We do not dream of what we seem  
To those we hold of meaner race ;  
God gave us pride, to them denied,  
And stamped our manhood on our  
face.

*WHEN O'ER THE DEEP.*

**W**HEN o'er the deep our barks are  
flying,  
Strong arms the straining rudder plying,  
There is no time for tears or sighing ;  
Who cares for breakers or for foam ?  
We sail for home !

When o'er the deep Life's bark is  
flying,  
False skipper he who'd e'er be crying :  
" Put back, put back, the day is dying !"  
Care we for daylight or for death,  
Who sail for home ?



*CANADA.*

OUR Heritage, it was not bought  
with gold,  
But blood and valour paid for what is  
here ;  
So our loved country deem we doubly  
dear.  
Its newness, not so much unlike the  
Old,  
We built our strength upon.

They, too, were strong and stern, our  
sires ;  
Not upraised they in lands of mellow  
light ;  
Their sinews also used to storm and  
blight,  
Ne'er knew they tropic gifts, or had  
desires,  
But what were hardly won.

*MY HEART'S WITH THEE.*

I VE grasped the friendly hands,  
Our lips have said adieu ;  
They'll seek their own in distant lands,  
And songs of home ring o'er the blue.  
No cote or hearth have I to boast,  
My bark is ever on the sea ;  
My home is there, Clarisse, where is my  
heart—  
It is with thee !

What matter where he toils  
Who homeless is as I ?  
What's wealth and fame to kindred's  
smiles ?  
What's country, language, flag, or  
sky ?  
And when I'm sought to name my  
home,  
Of Lucia's isle I'll choose to be.  
My home is there, Clarisse, where is my  
heart—  
It is with thee !

*THE BALLAD OF RODERICK REDDE.*

**A** STRUGGLING young wit was  
hight Roderick Redde,  
Who seemed ne'er a jot to lose hope  
with the years  
Who laughed at his sorrows, and scoffed  
at his fears.  
Quoth he to himself (as he kept back  
the tears):  
"In Life, what care I for the path that  
I tread?  
'Twill surely be soft enow when I am  
dede!"

He felt that the candle of merit would  
shine  
Through the bushel of hunger and  
weatherbeat clothes,  
Soiled linen, and pride, too, and  
vagabond woes,  
And divers devices that poverty knows;  
So he drank him this bumper, in absence  
of wine,  
In a garret-brewed tipple of Fancy  
divine:

“ I thank Thee, God, who hast  
fashioned me strong  
To plod my way through the mire of  
Fate,  
Of hunger, of want, of envy, of Hate,  
That my soul may attain to the wide-  
open gate,  
To beat down the giants of folly and  
Wrong,  
And gallop the highway of Glory along!”

He drank him a bumper—this vassal,  
this slave—

“To the health of the world!” cried  
Roderick Redde.

“It has thrust me in garrets, and fed  
me on bread ;

But a good time is coming, and, after  
I’m dede,

And this poor, feeble clay is at rest in  
the grave,

I’ll have smiles from the fairest, and  
cheers from the brave.

Prophetic young spark! With a stone at  
his head,  
The world straight proceeded to open  
its eyes;  
And the Critics, espying his tomes  
with surprise,  
Belauded his pathos and wit to the  
skies;  
Thus, on the same spot where his heart's  
blood was shed,  
Great became Master Redde—who a  
decade was dead!

ENVOI.

O poets, if struggling! O brothers in  
art!  
No longer attempt to gain here for  
your pains;  
Strive hungrily onward, play nobly your  
part,  
And dream of Fame smiling—upon your  
remains!

*REGARD D'AMOUR.*

**W**E shall never, never meet, little  
maid!

Never smile and never greet, I'm afraid!  
But your dainty, fleeting glance is  
Queen of all my vagrant fancies:  
It was shot into this bosom; and it  
stayed.

True, such token is not mickle, little  
maid!

And it may not prove you fickle or a  
jade;

But an epoch must be reckoned,  
That sweet fraction of a second,  
For in it I learned to love you, little  
maid!

We shall never, never meet, little maid!  
Neither in the sunny street or the shade!  
Be the future blank or laden  
For myself or for thee, maiden,  
In my heart your glance is graven, nor  
can fade.

*THE LAST CHIEF.*

ONTARIO! my father's land,  
I bear thee still affection deep;  
Yet pray I the great Father's wand  
May never lull my sons to sleep!

"The march of white, the doom of  
red!"

I muttered in despairing youth;  
And straightway vowed to bow my head,  
Because the white increased, forsooth.

I now am weak, who then was strong;  
But age the strength of hate returned.  
I would renew th' ancestral song,  
Revive the torch which once had  
burned,

And with my single might recall  
The martial spirit of my sires;  
With action quick offset the fall,  
And kindle back the smould'ring fires.

Chiowa! my wrist is like a twig—  
My body trembles like a leaf.  
What though my heart with deeds is big?  
My bosom torn with hate and grief?

By Erie's banks I've wandered long,  
And dying, here I'll lay me down ;  
There are none left to right the wrong,  
The eagle to her nest has flown.



*BRITAIN IS NOT NOW A TINY ISLE.*

**B**RITAIN is not now a tiny isle  
Hemmed in by the rude North Sea,  
But by the Ganges and the Nile.  
Where the St. Lawrence  
Heaves her torrents—  
Where the South wind blows  
And the Palm tree grows—  
Britain is, and her sons be!

Yonder is only the Jungle home:  
The Lion's lair, that he leaves behind  
Into the forest wide to roam.  
And near or far,  
Where Britons are,  
Oft in their sleep  
Their fancies creep  
Back to the fastness of their kind.

Think you it matters what sky covers  
them?  
Or what is the raiment Britons wear?  
For the glint of the royal diadem  
Pierces the shade  
Of the African glade,  
And the red of our flag  
Is seen on each crag,  
As it waves in the Arctic air!

MARAH.

**D**O not despond, O soul of mine !  
Where'er the Future is, there  
will ye be.

By placid hill, or dismal lea,  
Or eke upon the turbid sea :  
Where'er I hear call Destiny,  
There will ye be !

Wax strong ! fear not ! I seek a way ;  
O for a single ray, a glimm'ring spark,  
To point my haven through the dark !  
But ere these limbs be stiff and stark  
I'll see the light, and list the lark  
Proclaim me free !

For that ! for that ! what boot these ills ?  
This weary groping in the cheerless  
gloom ?

Serve ye this flesh, whate'er its doom,  
I'll house me in the silent tomb ;  
But ye sprang from no mortal womb,  
O soul of mine !

*MY SOUL.*

**I**N vain the dull webs are daily spun  
Around the beacon of my soul.  
'Tis not in that poor insect's might  
To weave a web so firm and whole  
As to quench all its light.

That faint blaze must never feebler grow,  
Which now the sordid woof consumes;  
Thou madest this, my soul, to shine  
Through webs of even greater looms.  
Why should I now repine?

It may be, my light will never burn  
With flame so strong, and large, and  
clear,  
As to be seen by all who grope  
Afield. But to the frail ones near  
It may bring Hope!

*THE THREADBARE CAVALIER.*

**M**Y Love, she lives in a mansion  
great ;

My paths I tread alone !  
A slender purse my sole estate,  
Yet she shall be my own.

Hail ! to my love in her silken gown ;  
What though she noble be ?  
Scorn to the scorn of a rival's frown,  
When my Love smiles on me.

Away with the barriers 'twixt us both !  
Which keep two souls apart ;  
I'll have ye witness, world, our troth,  
Or more than one spoilt heart.

My Love, she lives in a mansion great,  
And I live in Ragfair ;  
Yet I can wait—and I can wait ;  
And all mankind beware !

*THE DOCTORS OF JACKSONVILLE.*

**I**T was their trade. No pomp was theirs.

No public spoils or honours to be won.  
Each went not out as he who bears  
The sword of battle. These died alone.

Back to earth their forms are laid;  
Or thrown, uncoffined. No last sacred  
rite

Is done. Accustomed to the sight  
No eyes have wept: few lips have  
prayed.

No song is sung o'er them who nursed  
With stoic brow, and their lot shared  
When foul contagion loosed its worst—  
The stricken. Not heroes they who dared  
To stand when all their fellows fled—  
“It was their trade” the people said.

This their sole requiem until Heav'n  
cried

“This trade shall last when mortal tools  
Are rust-choked, and fame laid aside,  
And lost are all Life's petty social rules;  
When War's high heroes have each  
other slain;

When Art and Statecraft warp their  
souls away:

Still shall be seen such band Samaritan  
Plying such deeds of God-like charity.”

*MADRIGAL.*

**W**HEN skies are bright,  
Man's heart is light,  
And April buds match maiden blushes;  
Then every swain his love would gain,  
Whose dimpled cheek with rapture  
flushes.

When skies are grey,  
O maiden say  
Is not man's heart an object fickle?  
Seek not to stop  
The salt tear-drop  
That from your violet eye will trickle.

When skies are black,  
Man's heart, alack!  
Like a plucked hedge-rose doth wither,  
And Phryne's brow  
Is sombre now  
Her love has fled she knows not whither.

*THE LAND OF THE MAPLE LEAF.*

**T**WIXT the snows of the North Pole  
And the heat of the Caribbees,  
There lies the land I here extol.  
At East and West two oceans roll ;  
The half is severed from the whole  
By a row of Maple trees,  
A-quivering in the breeze.  
From Cape Breton to Vancouver's reef  
The Border surrounds, and limits, and  
bounds,  
The land of the Maple Leaf.

There, men's hearts are like the sun ;  
And the maidens all are fair.  
A better clime than that there's none,  
If work, or play, or war'll be done.  
You'll find the task is first begun  
By a row of Maple trees  
A-quivering in the breeze.  
From Cape Breton to Vancouver's reef  
The Border surrounds, and limits, and  
bounds,  
The land of the Maple Leaf.



*THEY ALL COULD GO.*

**T**HEY all could go—I scarce would  
sigh,  
If you'd remain.  
There is no pang I would not bear,  
No grief I would not gladly share,  
I'd smile at any change of sky,  
If you were by!

They best could go—that sad - faced  
throng  
With puny hearts; in whose cramped  
veins,  
And these, doth slowly course along  
The blood, that crawled to us like brine,  
From some ancestor in the northern  
fens—  
If you were mine.

NOTRE DAME.

SOMETIMES, when the day draws  
her mantle around her,  
And I sit in the shadows with half-  
closed eyes,  
From the spire at hand comes a pealing  
of grandeur,  
The sound of the bells as it mounts to  
the skies.

It is not for my ears that it seems to  
be pealing ;  
It is not for the folly that fills up the  
hour ;  
It is not for the sinner within the  
Church kneeling ;  
It is not for the minions of lucre  
and power.

Some voices are weak, and some souls  
are oft pinioned  
By chains, which self forges from  
falsehood alone.  
In vain do some tongues, by ambition  
dominioned,  
Cry the prayer which shall reach, in its  
strength, to the Throne.

Lo! there in the clouds are shapes  
saintly and smiling;

'Tis to them—'tis to them that the  
melody pours!

Not for you, O vain world that an hour  
beguiling,

This echo of penance from Notre  
Dame soars.

Peal loudly! ye vespers; thy grand  
tones are ringing

The prayers of the few to the saintly  
array,

Who, higher and higher, to Paradise  
winging,

Are lost in the mist of the white,  
starry way.

*THE RAINBOW.*

**A** BLACKENED sky, a cloud of dust,  
A row of shapes in doorways  
thrust,  
The rain beats down in savage gust.

A patter at first, great drops of rain,  
Sheets upon sheets in ruthless train,  
Drenched eaves and gushing lane.

And then a calm; the sky o'erhead  
Grows less and less the hue of lead;  
Away in the West is a tint of red.

And in the East a mist is seen,  
Its middle a column of haziest sheen,  
Blue and yellow, crimson and green.

It lifts to Heaven its wondrous bow,  
The tide of light resumes its flow,  
And slowly fades the arc's bright glow.

But babes have crooned in rare delight,  
The toiler's heart has grown more light,  
Life's task has grown a shade less trite.

*ULTRO OBLATUS.*

**O** ARCH disturber of my studious  
calm,

Release me from thy coy entwining.  
I court thee not, nor need thy balm  
To soothe a spirit far from pining.

I court thee not O Love ; so heed  
Where thou thy poisoned shafts are  
flying:  
Lest thou and not the swain should  
bleed,

And Love so hit be speedy dying.

*MARIE ANTOINETTE.*

**A** CENTURY of years to-day is  
heaped upon her grave:  
The beautiful, the chaste, the noble  
Queen of France.  
What martyr fair as she in all the wide  
expanse,  
That is with annals sown or story ever  
gave?  
One half so bright—one tithe so brave?  
What lesson ever taught of human lust  
For blood, for power, or all-corroding  
change  
To equal this? What tale so strange  
As of a queen flung headless in the dust  
Because she fearless was, and kept her  
trust?

DESTINY.

I NEVER seek beyond to rise  
Life's vanity and common things,  
But heaven, for some purpose wise,  
Puts forth its hand, and clips my wings.

Once, when I writhed in torment fierce;  
Again foiled of my purpose wide;  
Resolving yet yon clouds to pierce,  
I heard a voice above my pride :

“Not all the strength ye have in ye,  
Nor all the strength ye may implore,  
Avails ye aught. 'Tis God's decree :  
*'Your will, and not your deeds, may  
sear !'*”

LONDON.

**H**OW hast thou girded me, London,  
and jeered at me,  
Chid me, and tumbled me? How often  
sneered at me?  
How thy thick vapours have darkly  
upreared at me?  
How in the night thy dulled moon has  
peered at me?  
Was I afraid?

No, for I loved thee, grey city, and  
blessed thee;  
Romped with thee, writ of thee, in gay  
colours dressed thee.  
Oft hath my fancy, o'erteeming, caressed  
thee;  
And to thy bosom once more I have  
pressed me,  
When I have strayed.



*THE LAUREATE.*

**H**ERE is the scroll—dip ye the pen,  
And write in grief—write, yet in  
pride,

The last name in that minstrel choir:  
He sang the hopes and deeds of men—  
And died.

Sweet, mighty choir—whose tongue  
ascends

To drown the din of daily woe,  
It to our ears seems fuller—higher  
Than that which sang our worthiest ends  
Ago.

Nor shall his fame be less, I ween,  
Because he trod the ways of grace;  
For that he scorned the gilded mire,  
All Time shall keep his laurels green—  
All race.

*ISOLÉ.*

**A**LL mankind is moving round me,  
With its restlessness of mind ;  
But Fate's mighty chains have bound me  
In a prison from my kind.

Others have their pain and pleasure,  
Others have their ends to gain ;  
Moving to the world's great measure,  
I, alone, have only pain.

Round me, millions,—happy, hoping,—  
Feel all that Life has to give !  
In the darkness I am groping,  
Hardly deeming that I live.

Is there no one, God, give answer,  
Who knows solitude like mine ?  
Is it that my soul is denser ?  
Has my heart's blood changed to  
brine ?

Heartstrings dulled, no chord respondeth  
Save to touch of sympathy.  
Surely others like despondeth—  
Surely some are lone as I !

*OPPORTUNITY.*

**I** STOOD, at eve, in a great clock  
tower,  
And gazed at the throng below,  
Piercing the dusk to the dialled hour,  
Watching the minutes go.

And each time that the bell did sound,  
Far down in the street below,  
A spirit sped, yet all around  
Still watched the minutes go.

No hand was raised to lift the dead,  
Nor eye was wet with woe;  
But in the throng he made his bed,  
Who watched the minutes go.

I wrung my hands in horror then,  
And cried to those below—  
“Why gaze ye still, O sons of men,  
At the fleeting minutes go?”

“Turn, turn your sight to nobler things,  
Forget this fleeting span!  
Who counts dull time, life's treasure  
flings  
From him, a ruined man.”

They heeded not—with glassy eyes  
Fixed fast, with fevered glow,  
They cast from them the cherished prize,  
To watch the minutes go.

ize,

*WITH THE WORLD.*

**L**AUGH with the world, old friend ;  
be gay.

Then seek thy lonely chamber, where  
Thou may'st ignoble deeds forswear,  
And there repent a misspent day.

Lust with the world, be base and small ;  
Then haste thee to the quiet brook,  
From Nature's pure, reproachful look,  
Learn, thou, thy degradations all.

Lie with the world, for wealth and fame ;  
Then, at thy bedside, hold it right.  
Deem for thy hearth thy actions light,  
Because it gilds who bear thy name.

Thus thou may'st sear thy conscience,  
friend ;  
By slow degrees crush out the spark ;  
And, godless, groping in the dark,  
Deathward thy lonely journey wend !

*THE WORLD IS POTENT.*

**T**HE world is potent when it has  
offended. Make  
Of the offender your master, not your  
foe.  
As master can ne'er slave insult, the  
blow  
Has little smart when the rod break  
Upon the flesh alone. 'Twould wound  
the pride  
Were mankind, as foe, your frail strokes  
to deride.

Vassals the quicker learn the secrets of  
the Manse—  
Ye hold the priceless keys to go and  
come!  
Jest when your master jests, speak, or  
be dumb;  
Pamper his vain blood, that in his  
heart's expanse,  
'Twill gush there ruddier, in that moment  
blest,  
When you can plunge the poniard in  
his breast!

IN THE CLOSET.

**W**E are all philosophers profound,  
And sages deep, inscrutable ;  
Yet, when we move abroad, I'm bound  
To say we are refutable.

Within our closet we're magnanimous,  
Contemning deeds uncharitable ;  
But there, ye Heavens ! how unanimous  
We are in being irritable.

O, brave and good we are in verity !  
To the world, still small and asinine.  
*Anathema!* hence his asperity,  
Who wails in language saturnine.

A boon of Fate we ask : to be that  
What we do seem in solitude.  
Cannot the shallow world but see that  
We are not what in folly viewed ?

*YOUTH.*

I.

**W**HEREFORE let sombre care  
securely sit,  
And have a haven, in a growing mind?  
When Age and sore decrepitude knock  
without,  
'Twere but in nature both to greet  
With mien resigned; but sunny youth  
should lock  
Its gates to a restraint and providence.

II.

It is decreed, by powers past our fitful  
ken,  
That youth must wait for what it seeks.  
The flame,  
Too early else, might spend itself in  
wanton glare,  
Or lumine but a single spot, where else  
its light  
Would reach, in rays of steady pow'r,  
All up Parnassus' still-beshadowed slope.



*LA LUTTE.*

**W**ORE away night's shadows never  
Into grey and fitful dawn,  
But some one, in strong endeavour,  
On his couch,—with features wan,

Wan with striving, wan with weeping,  
Heedless of the dark or dole,  
Hating the dull world for sleeping,—  
Fought a battle with his soul.

And the day comes dull or glowing,  
And the warrior, tempest-tossed,  
To the world the same front's showing,  
With that battle won or lost.

LOST.

**O** RUTH is fair, and fair is her form,  
And her eyes are a sight to see.  
Her cheek is soft, and her breast is  
warm—

So like a sylph is she.

Her cheek is pink, and her throat is  
white ;

And her tresses are flax in hue.  
Her heart (O her heart) is as black as  
night ;

And her tender eyes are blue.

Her soul is the dusk of the day of wrath,  
And her voice is low and sweet.

Her walk is as straight as a virgin's path,  
Where once trod her dainty feet.

Ah, Ruth is fair, and her form is fair,  
And her face is a sight to see.

Her cheek is soft as her silken hair,  
And she is lost to me.

*YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR ROSES.*

**Y**OU shall have your roses, sweet.  
Life is your suitor, he'll bring  
them you

(Not for you the struggle and blight :  
Smiles and kisses and glad sunlight,  
And the morning dew).

You shall have your roses, sweet.  
Love's a gallant, he will choose the best.  
Not for you the passionate dole,  
Not for you is the chastened soul  
And the wild unrest.

You shall have your roses, sweet.  
Death's an old beau, he will lay them  
there.

Not for you the storms dreary gust,  
When your cold heart is up-heaped with  
dust

You'll be as fair.

L'AIR MANQUANT.

LIKE a lark in its flight empyrean,  
Her voice rings out through the  
room ;  
And she sings of things, as she touches  
the strings,  
That scatter away the gloom.

She trills me the ballad of "Robin  
Adair,"  
And the tropes of the "Low-backed  
Car";  
Passing fair is the air of "Wapping  
Old Stair,"—  
Passing sweet the wheezy guitar.

She runs through the time-cherished  
melodies,  
Sweet warbled by lassies of Rye ;  
Yet—unsung by her tongue is the song  
to have wrung  
A tear from out mine eye.

It lies—in my bosom—asleeping,  
But some day it will wake to the light,  
And the theme of my dream will glisten  
and gleam  
Like a radiant star at night.

*DESPONDENCY.*

IS not the mind of youth—  
When overcast with toil and early  
care—  
Like to a desert's arid path?  
No flowers are or verdure there.

Is not the goal of Life,  
When won with grief, and misery, and  
pain,  
Like to a rose midst myriad thorns  
Which, glistening, shatters when we  
gain?

SMOKING SONG.

**A**ND when shall a woman come to  
replace thee?

I have known thee well, I have loved  
thee long!

When shall a woman come to erase thee?  
To blot out tobacco, good liquor, and  
song.

CHORUS.

For a bottle and pipe, they make a  
man ripe,—

They make a man ripe, stout-  
hearted, and gay.

Then here's to the fellow who loves  
the weed mellow,

And a plague take the woman  
who leads him astray.

When shall a lassie seem sweeter and  
dearer,

With a smile and a kiss for a bowl  
of the weed,

A cluster of curls for a mug of Madeira,  
A prisoner's lot for the life of the  
freed?

O woman! O woman, your fond  
lips, alack! O

Your snowy white breast, and your  
deep azure eyne,

Will woo us, despite us, from dainty  
tobacco;

And what, to your charms, is a bumper  
of wine?

*CHANSON À MARCHER.*

**S**ING the poets, Love divine ;  
And the tipplers praise their wine  
To set the pulses beating, and the heart  
strings thrilling through.  
But these are enervating, momentarily  
elating ;  
And when the spell is over, pray confess  
it, ye feel blue.

Now toast him to the dregs,  
The god who gave us legs ;  
For when brooding melancholy comes  
upon us unawares,  
There is nothing half so bracing  
As a league or too of pacing,  
And the surest, best prescription is to  
walk away our cares.



SONNET.

DREAM on thy dream, nor wake,  
sweetheart ;  
The moonlight plays upon thy brow.  
Soon salt drops from those lids will  
start,  
But now, my love, thou smilest now.

I would not see thee different ;  
The change will come in its due hour.  
Thy girlish laugh will hollow ring—  
The world will have thee in its power.

Dream on thy dream: and yet I weep  
To see thy brow so sweet, so fair.  
A little lapse and Life, not sleep,  
Will hold its grey dominion there.

NOT ENGLAND'S BENDED KNEE.

**S**HALL England stoop and yield her  
ground,  
And see the links of race unbound?  
Shall yonder Union Jack be furled,  
And England from her heights be hurled?  
England stands where England stood:  
O Britons, guard your brotherhood!  
And hand to hand, and blood with blood,  
Face the phalanx of the world!

All loyal hearts, in every clime,  
Up! Drink a toast with me:  
*"Old England's arm; her bended arm,  
And not her bended knee!"*

While Britain rules on land and waves,  
We will not stoop to truce with slaves.  
Our fathers' blood was shed in vain,  
If traitors strike these bonds in twain.  
Wave on, proud flag, by breezes fanned,  
Wave o'er one Queen, one Heart, one  
Land!

Joined in love shall ever stand  
All her children in the main.

*IF MY HEART HAD WINGS.*

**I**F my heart had wings it would distant  
    roam,

If my love were a dove, it would seek  
    its home.

Though the winds of the ocean blew  
    fierce and shrill,

Love ne'er would rest, nor its wings  
    grow still;

Beauty its compass, and youth its chart,

If my love were a dove—it would reach  
    thy heart!

What matter the night, were it dark  
    and drear?

What matter, if I'd wandered far or near?

If my love were a dove, and my heart  
    had wings,

I'd be like the lark that at Paradise sings

For an angel to open its portal of gold,

And thy bosom my wandering love enfold.

*LOVE AND LILACS.*

**T**HE south wind sped from a scented  
isle,

Where Flora fair reposes.  
Orchids it blew, and jasmine too,  
And breath of tropic roses.  
It stole upon my hungry sense,  
And left me faint and reeling,  
But ne'er a blossom's odour rare  
Unto my heart was stealing.

O the Lilac's the flower I bring,  
Kissed by the Bee and the Spring.  
In sunshine and rain there comes Love  
in its train,  
There's magic and youth in the Lilac.

Upon my ladye's breast there lie  
Sweet lilies in a cluster,  
And in her hair beyond compare  
Rest tulips full of lustre.  
But in my ladye's heart there is  
No hedge-rose from the gloaming,  
A sweeter blossom lovers seek  
When Love he goes a roaming.

*ANACHRONISTIC.*

O MAIDEN fair, O mistress mine,  
A threadbare lover's dying;  
Of riches, talent, beauty, none—  
Only equipped for sighing.

You'd jostle in the crowded lane.  
He'd doff his shabby cocked hat.  
And mistress fair, he'd sue to you  
A scandal you'd be shocked at.

Yet blithely, too, he'd worship you  
Without your gold and jewels;  
Take brave delight in scaling walls,  
Or fighting lover's duels.

But maiden fair, no dream so bright  
But Fate doth love to mock it.  
In Eighteen Eighty Nine am I,  
While you are—in a locket!

A LA BIBLIOTHEQUE.

NINE strikes the clock and the  
miner is here,  
N'er sooner ne'er later this many a year.

Look how he bends ; see his odd muffled  
throat,  
His dry, wrinkled cheek, and his  
threadbare coat.

Out from his pocket he takes his pick,  
And delves away till his sight grows  
thick.

The live-long day he digs and delves  
At the buried treasure beneath the  
shelves.

But n'er a nugget or grain of gold  
Could the simple pate of the miner hold.

Often, methinks, when the miner is dead,  
He'll have books at his coffin and  
books at his head.

His clay to a grave of books they'll  
consign,  
With *Liber mortuum* writ on his shrine.

TO A FRIEND.

**A** FOOL'S Paradise? Who would  
not abide,  
Though Fortune did henceforth nothing  
but chide,  
In a fool's paradise? 'Tis your fashion  
to scorn  
At the careless young wit with a future  
forlorn,  
But the present's his own, and why  
should he fill  
The little he has with bodings of ill?  
If we pondered in Life on the shortness  
of it,  
On the folly of gilding a globe we  
must quit  
So quickly,—we scarcely can do more  
than sigh,  
Laugh, love, weep, in a breath, and  
then die,—  
We should poison God's air with our  
cynical breath.  
'Tis best to enjoy—Let's be fools to  
the death!

*THE SHERIFF.*

**A** SHERIFF bode in a Kentish town,  
His paunch as full as his beard  
was brown ;  
Of mighty renown his Cimmerian frown.

And criminals of every kind  
With fetters he would tightly bind,  
In cells confined with vermin lined.

He jingled keys where'er he went,  
That could be heard all over Kent ;  
His staff him lent a grim portent.

When children heard him on the street,  
They turned full white as any sheet,  
And scuttled fleet on shodden feet.

But in his house, O sad to think !  
This dreadful man scarce dared to blink,  
And his frown of ink to the floor would  
sink.

No more than a mouse his wife him  
feared ;  
His family, too, at his greatness sneered ;  
And his babes were reared to pluck at  
his beard !



ANAGRAM.

(To Clarie.)

CLEAR thy young brow of parting,  
grief, and pain;  
Lo, for the future becks thee with a  
smile!  
And if unto these loved ones thou  
should'st ne'er again  
Return: shine brightly thou on them  
awhile  
In tropic climes. That sun, which,  
rising there  
E'en softer, will, than here, more fair  
appear!

*PLAIN.*

**P**LAIN? you ask. Ned wuz sartinly  
plain—  
The homeliest man from the coast of  
Maine  
To the Golden gulf; an' so fur from  
vain,  
Of vanity Ned hadn't nary a grain.

“Jest plain” wuz his motto—all over, I  
guess;  
Plain in his manners, an' plain in his  
dress!  
'N' plain in his intellect,—quick to  
confess  
His ignorant “*No*,” when another 'd say  
“*Yes*.”

One o' the plainest, ol' fashionest kind  
'At ever I see; generations behind  
The run o' the settlers you nowadays  
find.  
Alongside o' Ned, them settlers, they  
shined!

He never *did* nothin'! This here ain't  
a tale

O' the way that Ned made a durn  
villain to quail,

Or rescued a gal on the Indian trail,  
Or give up his life for a comrade frail.

Yet, if they'd to do, he'd ha' done it  
right

In the plainest way, yit with all his  
might.

No; Ned wuz called home o' the fever  
one night,

'N' we buried his body by a bonfire  
light.

Jest shuffled off plain, 'thout nary show;  
"Plain truth," says he, "is: I'm sorry  
to go;

But Him what's aloft will let me, I  
know,

Turn down my blame lights in Paradise  
—low."

